



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

PEREFERKOWITSCH'S EDITION OF BERAKOT

תלמוד בבלי על פי כתבי יד ודפוסים ראשונים: מסכת ברכות: *Talmud Babylonicum* ad codices manuscriptos editionesque veterrimas correctum et completum edidit N. PEREFERKOWITSCH, S. Petersburg 1909. 8 + 136 pp., 8°.

A critical edition of the Babylonian Talmud is an old desideratum of Jewish science, but the time has not yet come even to begin this task. One must first be clear about the method of procedure and solve a number of preliminary questions. A mere collection of variants will not do in this case. As a popular book which was very much studied, the Talmud naturally suffered numerous additions and changes, which are extremely difficult to identify, as they were written in the same style as the original; the discussions lend themselves especially to additions, considering that the work itself plainly shows development and allows us to recognize different layers, as Friedmann has proved by some instructive examples (דבר על אודות התלמוד אם יוכל הוא להתרנם כל צרכו, Vienna, 1885). One may doubt whether there ever was a uniform text current in the two Babylonian academies which took part in its redaction. We know that shortly after the Talmud had been written down by the Saboraim, additions by the Gaon Jehudai were incorporated into it (Brüll, *Jahrbücher*, II, 121-123). As early an author as Saadia has doubts about the authenticity of the Talmud text (*Oeuvres*, IX, 168, No. 119) and speaks of different readings (*ib.*, 167, No. 110, where a reference to אשכול III, 3 and Saadia's commentary on ברכות, 24 [ed. Wertheimer], is to be added, and in a few passages of the commentary just mentioned). The later Geonim very frequently inform their correspondents that their reading of the Talmud on which the question is based is different from that current in the Babylonian academies (comp. e. g. Harkavy's *Responsa*, No. 272). We see that even as early as the

tenth century different texts of the Talmud must have been used in different countries. In the time of the last Gaon Hai much uncertainty existed in Babylonia itself about the text in many passages. Hai in one case discusses four different readings, where our editions have a fifth (Brüll, *Jahrbücher*, IV, 70). He speaks of those who, often wrongly, fix the text (נִרְסָאִי in ed. Cassel No. 78, נוֹסָח in ed. Harkavy, No. 272), of old readings which he consulted (ed. Cassel, *l.c.*) and which differed in language though not in contents (ed. Harkavy, No. 334), and of a different version which he calls נִמְרָא רַבִּי רַב (ed. Harkavy, No. 334, and probably 272), and which, according to Schorr (הַחֲלוּץ, XIII, 85), constituted a more elaborate form of the discussions. Hai also informs us of different readings dating back to older schools (ed. Harkavy, 229). It will therefore be necessary first to reconstruct the different types of the text used in different countries just as is the case with the Septuagint and other books which have a similarly complicated textual history, before even an attempt can be made to establish the text.

A thorough examination of the Talmud quotations in the Gaonic literature, with constant attention to the academies to which the respective Geonim belong, will probably yield rich results in giving some idea of the differences between Suran and Pumbedithan texts, and by means of such results may even help to determine the authorship of Responsa in doubtful cases. We also have rich material for the Kairwan schools, in their questions addressed to the Geonim, and especially in the commentaries of its chief representatives, R. Hananel and R. Nissim.

As for the text of the Spanish school, one could follow it in its development for over four centuries, from the halakic compendium of Alfasi and the code of Ibn Ghiat down to the haggadic collection of Jacob ibn Ḥabib and the anonymous אגרות התלמוד. The codes and commentaries of authorities like Naḥmanides, Ibn Adret, R. Jom Tob b. Abraham, and R. Nissim bar Ruben, and collections like Isaak Aboab's מנורת המאור and the ילקוט, as well as the *Pugio Fidei* and numberless others, will present abundant material to the investigator. Here we even have full texts at our disposal, as Seeligman has pointed out lately

(*ZfhB.*, XII, 18-19). In addition to the fragments of the Faro edition of 1494 which Seeligman discovered, the so-called Salonica edition (*ZfhB.*, XII, 14) actually, it seems, printed at Fez (*ZfhB.*, XVI, 80) in 1521, and the Spanish MS. of חולין, a copy of יבמות which Chwolson (ראשית מעשה הדפוס בישראל, Warsaw 1897, 22) saw in London, and declares to have been printed in Guadalaxara 1482, and some fragments in Chwolson's Library (*ib.*, 28, note) should be utilized for this purpose. As Spanish texts enjoyed a great authority, even the Provencal and French scholars often refer to them and testify that certain readings are found in them (נוסח ספרדי often e. g. in R. Abraham b. David's and R. Zerariah ha-Levi's writings; R. Tam in Northern France refers to such readings). It would be interesting to examine the relations of these Spanish texts to those of the Geonim, as we know that their texts were directly received from Babylonia (*JQR.*, XVIII, 401. 770).

Much greater difficulties are presented by the Italian and Franco-German type. For the former the Aruk is our main source, which at the same time utilizes Gaonic, Kairwan, and German commentaries, and is therefore to be used with great discrimination. The later Italian scholars are strongly influenced by other countries. Yet Italian readings may have a special interest, as the Italians possibly obtained their text of the Talmud with their explanations from Palestine as I have suggested elsewhere (*ZfhB.*, XIII, 74). In the Franco-German text again a rather large number of conjectural corrections have been introduced by Rashi, R. Tam, R. Samuel b. Meir, and their schools, and it will require much labor to determine as far as possible what is a conjecture and what are original readings. On the other hand, our material for this Franco-German version is especially rich, as it is represented by the only complete MS. of the Talmud, the famous Codex Munich 95, and perhaps also the text of the editions; the old Mayence commentary, Rashi, and the work of the Tosafot, the numerous codes by the Franco-German authors and perhaps the Yalkuṭ, the fatherland of which will only be finally settled by an investigation into the texts of the Talmud and Midrashim it used, will give ample material for control. The Provencal authorities will in all probability prove to have utilized interpolated texts showing the

influence of Spanish as well as German MSS. The Yemen texts that have come to light during the last few years, add another type of the text in the large quotations occurring in the Midrash Ha-Gadol and other compilations, and some Talmudic MSS. of Columbia College. They show, for instance, remarkable differences in orthography. Another new problem is added by the Genizah texts, which mostly come from the East, the evidence of the indirect tradition there being very scarce. They can only be applied with advantage after the different leaves of single MSS. that are distributed among several libraries have been identified and put together. Then they will probably prove most important on account of their age.

The problem confronting any editor of a critical edition is thus, as we have seen, very intricate, the task is a gigantic one, and could only be accomplished by collaboration on the part of many prominent scholars. It will have to be preceded by many researches such as Margolis's dissertation: *Commentarius Isaacidis quatenus ad textum Talmudis investigandum adhiberi possit, tractatu Erubhin ostenditur* (New York 1891). It would be a good beginning to reconstruct e. g. the Spanish version of those treatises for which we have complete texts like עירובין (ed. Salonica 1521 in Frankfurt a. M.), קידושין (ed. Salonica in the British Museum; cf. Van Straalen, *Supplement*, 234 and corrections p. vii), יבמות (see above), and חולין (the old MS. Hamburg 169; cf. Seeligman, *l.c.*, p. 19), with a full apparatus of all the variations offered by compendia, commentaries, and codes of Spanish authors.

To give a larger and safer basis to the textual criticism at present, it would be the best and most feasible way to publish a correct transcript, not a photographic reproduction, of the Munich MS. with the variants of the first Bomberg edition and the editions by the Soncinos (*ZjhB.*, VIII, 143-144). Eventually the variants from Codex Oxford 366 might be added, which, it seems, represents an eastern type and contains a considerable part of the Talmud (see *OLZ.*, III (1900), 135). Such a publication should begin with those parts of the Talmud which are not covered by the vast collection of variants of the late Rabinowicz and for which we have at present no reliable material whatsoever for

textual criticism. This could serve in a way as a basis for further researches, and collations of the other codices could gradually be added thereto. But, of course, this could not be called a critical edition. It is evident that, as long as a separation of the material according to the above types has not been made, a critical edition is impossible, and any attempt to establish one would be at present delusive. One can free the current text from the worst mistakes with the aid of Rabbinowicz' work, which, though deserving the highest praise, is not very clearly arranged and unfortunately incomplete. Friedmann tried this in his edition of the treatise Makkot, published by the seventh Congress of Orientalists, with considerable success, but the title "Kritische Edition" is misleading.

The above remarks have been suggested by the appearance of a new text of the treatise ברכות by Mr. Pereferkowitzsch, which follows a different editorial principle, and can much less be approved than that of Friedmann. His text is eclectic and does not follow any certain authority. He arbitrarily follows one text or another in the same line without sufficient reason, and so gives a new text which never existed and has no sound basis. An analysis of a few lines will prove the justice of this contention. I choose p. 2, l. 19-30, the part contained in the first Genizah fragment (= G) of which a facsimile is given. L. 20 f. G, P, (= Paris MS.) and O (= Oxford MS.) read חנינא for חנניה, a variant which ought to have been mentioned; 22 and 24 the אמרת of ed. and G is changed into סלקא דעתך with M (= Munich MS.) and P; l. 23 after דבהן לחוד ed. GP rightly repeat שמע מנה which is missing in M, while in l. 25 after מאוחר even M repeats it. Yet it is omitted in the new edition. L. 23 לאו שמע מנה, the לאו is omitted in P but extant in all other MSS.; as it is left here, it ought to have remained in l. 25 in the same formula, though there MP omit it; l. 26-27 the reading of P which is found (as a gloss) in M after that of our editions is introduced in the text, and in one place הלכך מבעוד יום טובלין is replaced by ובי טובלין מבעוד יום טובלין of the Aruk; the reading of GM is given as variant and for קא אמינא which is supported by the parallelism, סבירא ליה (read לי) of G is supplied; l. 29 דתניא is only found in G, all other texts read דאמר, which is correct; l. 31-32 the reading of MPO and other old authorities is passed over in

silence. All these points are only *minutiae*, but they show that the whole method of procedure is based on a wrong principle. One ought not to change the text which serves as a basis for an edition if the new reading is **not** positively better. In case both are equal, one should abstain from unnecessary changes. Lack of consistency is also shown on the following page, where ל' l. 14 ought to have been given as variation like l. 4. According to Solomon Duran, it does not belong to the text (cf. Brüll, *Jahrbücher*, IV, 74), but there is room for doubt in this case. I do not intend to go into any further details. An examination of the text at different places shows the same result. The editor, in the introduction, points to the school editions of classical authors as his models. He forgets that an *editio minor* is only possible where an *editio major* is in existence as with all classical authors. If Friedmann's edition is not "critical in the full sense of the word," his is much less so. Neither can I agree with his comparison of Lowe's edition of the Mishna and Theodor's **בראשית רבא**. A reprint of a single MS. without variations and corrections is only justified in a few special cases as with the Vatican and Alexandrine text of the Septuagint. If Lowe did not know of the Parma MS. of the Mishna, he ought to have corrected his MS. according to the first edition of the Palestinian Talmud where necessary, and a full collation of this text ought to have been added. As it is, he only gave material for an edition, but his book does not deserve to be called an edition. Theodor, on the other hand, follows the MS. which in his judgment is the best extant, and only puts other readings into his text where they are undoubtedly better. There is room for discussion only in detailed cases; his principle will be recognized by everybody as correct.

Except for the principal objection to the manner in which he establishes his text, Pereferkowitsch's edition deserves full praise. His arrangement of the text, references to the sources, introduction of brackets, and modern typographical conveniences, facilitate the reading and make the text more accessible to the inexperienced reader. One only misses short explanatory notes like those in Friedmann's edition, without which the text will often be unintelligible to those for whom it is intended. The variations, especially where they consist of more than a single word, ought

to have been put in foot-notes, as they interrupt and disturb the context. The editor had for about a third of his text 27 different Genizah fragments, six pages of which he gives in facsimile. It would have been advisable to publish important variations found there in an appendix, especially those incorporated into his text. If in the future sections of his edition Mr. Pereferkowitsch will give a more uniform text and state his authorities where he supplies other readings, his work will be very welcome and prove useful until the time arrives when some such plan as has been indicated above can be carried out, after which alone a definite edition of the Talmud can be attempted.

Jewish Theological Seminary
of America.

ALEXANDER MARX